

**State Board of Education  
August 18, 2009  
Item I-5(a)**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Montpelier, Vermont**

**TEAM:** Standards & Assessment

**ITEM:** Essex North Supervisory Union: SQS Waiver re School Librarian

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** That the State Board grant Essex North Supervisory Union (Canaan School) a one-year SQS waiver to allow it to use Canaan Town Librarian, Deborah Lambert, as school librarian, notwithstanding the fact that Ms. Lambert does not hold an educator's license with a school librarian endorsement. See conditions under Background Information, below.

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** SBE Rules 2120.8.2(d) and 2121.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** Essex North SU's school librarian has recently resigned her position to become President of the Vermont NEA. Canaan Town Librarian, Deborah Lambert, has significant experience and education as a librarian. She has helped run the SU's 21<sup>st</sup> Century program, regularly conducts programs for students at the town library, and has served as a volunteer reader at the school. The town library is located roughly 100 yards from the school. The SU will contract with the town for at least 10 hours per week of Ms. Lambert's services. Ms. Lambert will be on site as necessary, and will have the assistance of a paraprofessional who will provide circulation services. The paraprofessional will be overseen by Ms. Lambert, who will also have Martha Allen, retired school librarian, available for mentoring and consultation by telephone.

This waiver is for the 2009-2010 academic year only, and any renewal thereof will require proof that the interests of students are being well served, and that the SU remains unable to fill the position with a properly licensed individual.

**COST IMPLICATIONS:** This waiver will reduce the SU's budget. The SU is located in an economically challenged area which recently lost a significant portion of its jobs due to the closure of a major local employer.

**STAFF AVAILABLE:** Mark Oettinger, General Counsel; Gail Taylor, Director, Standards & Assessment; Kathy Blanchard, School Improvement Coordinator

## Essex North Supervisory Union

(Averill, Avery's Gore, Bloomfield, Brunswick, Canaan,  
Lemington, Lewis, Norton, Warner's Grant and Warren's  
Gore)

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July 14, 2009

Dear Commissioner Vilaseca,

On behalf of the Canaan School Board, and in accordance with Section 25 of H.427, I am writing to request a variance from one of the school quality standard licensing requirements.

Canaan Schools (K-12) will have approximately 210 students during the 2009-2010 school year. If we are to follow the school quality standards as written we would need to hire, at the minimum, a .70 FTE licensed librarian. I am requesting to vary from this standard.

Canaan Schools would like to contract with the librarian at the Alice M. Ward library to provide oversight of the library at Canaan Schools. The school and town library are approximately 100 yards apart. In these economically depressed times (Ethan Allen, Canaan's main employer has laid off almost the entire workforce, approximately 400 workers in the last six months) it is imperative that town and school officials do what we can to increase efficiencies and decrease costs. The good old days of just maintaining the status quo year after year are over.

We want to consolidate administrative duties of our library programs. We would accomplish this by contracting with the town to allow Deborah Lambert, the town librarian to provide oversight of the school library. We would then hire a paraeducator to run the circulation desk. Mrs. Lambert has an excellent reputation and has built a well-regarded library program. Mrs. Lambert has administered the town library for the past six years. Her position at the town library is part-time. I am confident that Mrs. Lambert has the qualifications to oversee both the town and school library programs.

In the past this position required four hours of instruction per week, most of which was made up of reading to students and/or helping them to sign out and return books. The paraeducator will be able to handle these duties. Instruction in modern research techniques and use of 21<sup>st</sup> century media will be coordinated between Ms. Lambert, the paraeducator, and Tom Mays, Canaan Schools' technology coordinator.

I believe that with this arrangement Canaan Schools can not only meet, but exceed, the intention of the quality standards as they pertain to school libraries.

If you have any questions about this request, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

Respectfully,

Christopher R. Masson  
Superintendent, ENSU

CC: Mark Oettinger, General Counsel  
Canaan School Board  
Town of Canaan Select Board  
Deborah Lambert, Town Librarian